Catholic Catechism on Homosexuality

From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (English edition 1994)

2357 Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity [1], tradition has always declared that _homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered_ [2]. They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstance can they be approved.

2358 The number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible. [They do not choose their homosexual condition; for most of them it is a trial.] This inclination, which is objectively disordered, constitutes for most of them a trial. They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God’s will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord’s Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition.

*note:* bold text substituted for bracketed text on 8 September 1997 by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, successor to the Holy Inquisition

2359 Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection.

footnotes


[2] cf. Rom 1:24-27 "men... were inflamed with lust for one another"

[3] cf. 1 Cor 6:10 "Neither the... homosexual offenders... will inherit the kingdom of God."

[4] cf. 1 Tim 1:10 "the ungodly and sinful... perverts"

Cf. Gen 19:1-29
The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.

"My lords," he said, "please turn aside to your servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning." "No," they answered, "we will spend the night in the square."

But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate.

Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom--both young and old--surrounded the house.

They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them."

Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him and said, "No, my friends. Don't do this wicked thing.

Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don't do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof."

"Get out of our way," they replied. And they said, "This fellow came here as an alien, and now he wants to play the judge! We'll treat you worse than them." They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.

But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door.

Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

The two men said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here--sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here,

because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it."

So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, "Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!" But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished."
When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two
daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them.

As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, "Flee for your lives! Don't look
back, and don't stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept
away!"

But Lot said to them, "No, my lords, please!

Your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you have shown great kindness to me in
sparing my life. But I can't flee to the mountains; this disaster will overtake me, and I'll die.

Look, here is a town near enough to run to, and it is small. Let me flee to it--it is very small,
 isn't it? Then my life will be spared."

He said to him, "Very well, I will grant this request too; I will not overthrow the town you
speak of.

But flee there quickly, because I cannot do anything until you reach it." (That is why the
town was called Zoar.

By the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land.

Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah--from the LORD out
of the heavens.

Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities--
and also the vegetation in the land.

But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

Early the next morning Abraham got up and returned to the place where he had stood before
the LORD.

He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, toward all the land of the plain, and he saw
dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a furnace.

So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham, and he brought
Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived.

Rom 1:24-27

Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the
degrading of their bodies with one another.
They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

1 Cor 6:10

9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders

10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

note: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and 1 Timothy 1:8-10 list arsenokoitai among those who will be excluded from the Reign of God. This obscure term has been translated "homosexuals" but its exact meaning is debated.

1 Tim 1:10

9 We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers,

10 for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine

11 that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

note: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and 1 Timothy 1:8-10 list arsenokoitai among those who will be excluded from the Reign of God. This obscure term has been translated "homosexuals" but its exact meaning is debated.

footnotes

[2] cf. CDF, Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics, VIII

At the present time there are those who, basing themselves on observations in the psychological order, have begun to judge indulgently, and even to excuse completely, homosexual relations between certain people. This they do in opposition to the constant teaching of the Magisterium and
to the moral sense of the Christian people.

A distinction is drawn, and it seems with some reason, between homosexuals whose tendency comes from a false education, from a lack of normal sexual development, from habit, from bad example, or from other similar causes, and is transitory or at least not incurable; and homosexuals who are definitively such because of some kind of innate instinct or a pathological constitution judged to be incurable.

In regard to this second category of subjects, some people conclude that their tendency is so natural that it justifies in their case homosexual relations within a sincere communion of life and love analogous to marriage, in so far as such homosexuals feel incapable of enduring a solitary life.

In the pastoral field, these homosexuals must certainly be treated with understanding and sustained in the hope of overcoming their personal difficulties and their inability to fit into society. Their culpability will be judged with prudence. But no pastoral method can be employed which would give moral justification to these acts on the grounds that they would be consonant with the condition of such people. For according to the objective moral order, homosexual relations are acts which lack an essential and indispensable finality. In Sacred Scripture they are condemned as a serious depravity and even presented as the sad consequence of rejecting God. This judgment of Scripture does not of course permit us to conclude that all those who suffer from this anomaly are personally responsible for it, but it does attest to the fact that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered and can in no case be approved of.